The Office Action cited Col. 4, lines 15-25 of Alcott, which describe the method of Fig. 1, steps 52, 56, and 62 (Final Office Action, page 3). Referring to Fig. 1, Alcott merely discloses that the party must be qualified—and, therefore, the telecommunication feature must be **available**—in order for the invention to reach step 62. And, unless the party is qualified and the feature is available, step 66 of the Alcott method—"ESTABLISH AN ACCOUNTING RECORD"—cannot be performed.

Conversely, claims 1, 9, 10, and 17 call for processing "the first data structure"—particularly, a data structure which identifies a first party and an **unavailable** first telecommunication feature—"and the availability data". Further, these claims call for this processing "to determine that the first telecommunication feature **has become available** to the first party" (emphasis added). Contrary to this, step 52 of Fig. 1 shows that, if unavailability is determined, the Alcott method proceeds directly to flow chart step 74. At this point, written correspondence of service denial is sent, and the Alcott method ceases. There is no further processing of data structures, determining of availability, or other action disclosed or suggested by Alcott. Therefore, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection to claims 1, 9, 10, and 17 be withdrawn.

Moreover, claims 1 and 9 call for "inputting availability data which indicates an availability of the first telecommunication feature to a portion of the telecommunication network which serves the first party", "after storing the first data structure". Alcott does not disclose storing such a data structure or afterwards inputting availability data. Therefore, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection to claims 1 and 9 be withdrawn.

Next, claims 24-26—which incorporate amendments previously addressed in the Office Action—call for "notifying" the first party "that the first telecommunication feature has become available" to him, "in accordance with the first party having previously inquired about the first telecommunication feature

when unavailable". The Office Action cited Alcott, Col. 3, line 62 - Col. 4, line 5 and Col. 5, lines 40-56 as anticipating this claim element ("Response to Arguments", Final Office Action, Page 3). In Col. 3, line 62 - Col. 4, line 5, the Alcott reference merely describes the components used to execute step 52 of Fig. 1. In Col. 5, lines 40-56, the Alcott reference provides samples of a menu of telecommunication options. These options are provided indiscriminately, without regard to any previous inquiries. As noted above in regard to the Alcott reference (Fig. 1, steps 52 and 74) Alcott does not disclose or suggest further notifying action **after a party has inquired about an unavailable service**, much less notifying **in accordance** with that previous inquiry. Therefore, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that claims 24-26 be allowed.

Finally, claim 5 recites "informing, in the call, that the first telecommunication feature is unavailable to the first party", and claim 9 recites "informing, in the first call, that the first telecommunication feature is unavailable to the first party". The Office Action cites the Background of the Invention, along with Col. 3, line 41 - Col. 4, line 4, as anticipating this claim element. The Background merely discloses general methods of ordering telecommunication features but does not disclose or suggest how to handle cases of unavailable telecommunication features. The Alcott method of Col. 3, line 41 - Col. 4, line 4 discloses the steps of Fig. 1, but Fig. 1 makes no disclosure or suggestion of "informing, **in the call**". Instead, Alcott discloses, in steps 72 and 74, "COMMUNICATE A **WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE** DENYING THE ORDER TO THE ORIGINATING PARTY" (Fig. 1, emphasis added). Therefore, the functionality of "informing, in the call," that the telecommunication feature is unavailable is not suggested or disclosed in the Alcott reference. Thus, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection to claims 5 and 9 be withdrawn.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections to claims 1, 5, 9, 10, and 17 be withdrawn. In addition, claims 2-8

depend from claim 1, claims 11-16 depend from claim 10, and claims 18-23 depend from claim 17, all either directly or indirectly. Since these dependent claims include all of the features of the respective independent claims, plus additional features, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection to these claims also be withdrawn. As well, claim 24 depends from claim 1, claim 25 depends from claim 10, and claim 26 depends from claim 17, all either directly or indirectly. Since these dependent claims include all of the features of the respective independent claims, plus additional features, Applicant respectfully requests that these claims be allowed.

For all of the above reasons, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the present application. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at (312) 321-4224 if there are any outstanding issues that could be resolved through a telephone conference.

Respectfully submitted,

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Appendix A

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims

Please amend claims 1, 9, 10, and 17 and add claims 24-26, as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) A method comprising:

storing a first data structure which identifies a first party of a telecommunication network and a first telecommunication feature unavailable to the first party;

after storing the first data structure, inputting availability data which indicates an availability of the first telecommunication feature to a portion of the telecommunication network which serves the first party; and

processing the first data structure and the availability data to determine that the first telecommunication feature has become available to the first party[; and

in accordance with the first party having previously inquired about the first telecommunication feature when unavailable, notifying the first party that the first telecommunication feature has become available to the first party].

9. (Twice Amended) A method comprising:

receiving a first call from a first party of a telecommunication network;

determining that a first telecommunication feature is unavailable to the first party;

informing, in the first call, that the first telecommunication feature is unavailable to the first party;

storing a first data structure which identifies the first party and the first telecommunication feature unavailable to the first party;

receiving a second call from a second party;

determining that a second telecommunication feature is unavailable to the second party;

informing, in the second call, that the second telecommunication feature is unavailable to the second party;

storing a second data structure which identifies the second party and the second telecommunication feature unavailable to the second party;

receiving a third call from a third party;

determining that the first telecommunication feature is unavailable to the third party;

informing, in the third call, that the first telecommunication feature is unavailable to the third party;

storing a third data structure which identifies the third party and the first telecommunication feature unavailable to the third party;

after storing the first data structure, the second data structure, and the third data structure, inputting availability data which indicates [and] an availability of the first telecommunication feature to a portion of the telecommunication network which serves the first party but not the third party;

processing the first data structure, the second data structure, the third data structure, and the availability data to determine that the first telecommunication feature has become available to the first party but remains unavailable to the third party; and

[in accordance with the first party having previously inquired about the first telecommunication feature when unavailable,] notifying the first party in a fourth call that the first telecommunication feature has become available to the first party.

10. (Twice Amended) An apparatus comprising:

a database comprising a first data structure which identifies a first party of a telecommunication network and a first telecommunication feature unavailable to the first party; and

a computer to receive availability data which indicates an availability of the first telecommunication feature to a portion of the telecommunication network which serves the first party, the computer to process the first data structure and the availability data to determine that the first telecommunication feature has become available to the first party[, and

wherein, in accordance with the first party having previously inquired about the first telecommunication feature when unavailable, the computer outputs a signal to initiate notifying the first party that the first telecommunication feature has become available to the first party].

17. (Twice Amended) A computer-readable medium whose contents cause a computer to store a first data structure which identifies a first party of a telecommunication network and a first telecommunication feature unavailable to the first party, to receive availability data which indicates an availability of the first telecommunication feature to a portion of the telecommunication network which serves the first party, and to process the first data structure and the availability data to determine that the first telecommunication feature has become available to the first party[, wherein, in accordance with the first party having previously inquired about the first telecommunication feature when unavailable, the contents further cause the computer outputs a signal to initiate notifying the first party that the first telecommunication feature has become available to the first party].